



Freedom Arts Magazine

May 2014

Volume 4 Number 2



In This Issue

Space

By Alec Dietz & Josh White

Elijah

By John Guerrero

I Will Lift My Head

By Alaina Merin

In This Issue	Page
Editor's Note by Chris Hook.....	3
Faculty Editor's Note by Pat Booker	3
Publisher's Note by Rebecca Hook.....	3
Gypsy Bard by William Cluck.....	4
A Mild-Mannered Penguin by Thomas Jefferson.....	6
One Last Wheedle by Arthur Trickett-Wile	8
From the Last Day in October by Anonymous.....	9
Living the Dream by Ian Scarff.....	11
Space by Alec Dietz & Josh White	13
My Superhero by Ian McGinnis	15
Dayyynum by William Stouffer.....	21
Impossibility Is Relative by Jacob Gresores.....	22
Elijah by John Guerrero.....	24
I Will Lift My Head by Alaina Merin.....	34
Photos and Art	
Front Cover: <i>Arboreal Rainbow</i> by Sadie Norris	
Back Cover: <i>And Away We Go !</i> by Chris Hook	
Alice's Tea Cup by Amanda Carr.....	7
Captive by Trent Trevino	12
Pinnacle by Noah Schorr.....	17
Fisherman's Perspective by Warren Weiss	17
From the World of Sadie Norris by Sadie Norris.....	18
Meadow Reflection by Jace Husted.....	20
Bowl by Blake Oliva.....	20
Basin of Gold by Anthony Bauta.....	20
Cheshire Smile? by Becca Brown	23
Free as a Bird by Kayla Thomas.....	27
Flame On ! by Sadie Norris.....	29
Liquid Gold by T. J. Gold	35

ADMINISTRATION

Charles J. Karulak, Ed.D.
Headmaster
Louise Pastorino, MAT, M.Ed.
Head of Lower School
Steve Yocham, M.Ed.
Head of Upper School
Julie Saboe, M.A.
Director of Admissions

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

Mrs. Margie Warren
Chair
Mr. Brett Morgan
Vice Chair
Mrs. Carol Zernial
Secretary
Mrs. Jaydine Zachry
Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. Robert E. Bettac
Mrs. Katherine Korbell Brown
Mrs. Tracy Calloway
Mr. William Carrington
Mr. Shawn Loader
Mrs. Amy Perry
Mr. Brett W. Schouest
Courtney Crim, Ed.D.
Ex-Officio, MSAC
Charles J. Karulak, Ed.D.
Ex-Officio, Headmaster
Colleen Dietz
Ex-Officio, Parents Association

Authorized Organization:
The Winston School or San Antonio
8565 Ewing Halsell Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78229
(210) 615-6544
www.winston-sa.org

MISSION STATEMENT

The Winston School San Antonio exists to educate children in grade kindergarten through twelve with learning differences and learning disabilities in an atmosphere that addresses their personal learning styles and promotes self-esteem, a positive attitude about learning, and optimal attainment of educational and career goals.

Students will become advocates for them- selves and others and will be able to make a contribution to the world in which they live.

Freedom Arts Magazine is a periodical dedicated to the talent that resides within each student at The Winston School of San Antonio. The submissions are original works by our students. The intellectual rights of each submission remains entirely the property of the student.

Student Editor..... Chris Hook
Associate Student Editor..... John Guerrero
Faculty Editor..... Paschal M. Booker

Editor's Note

Welcome to the spring edition of *Freedom Arts*. This has been an amazing run for the magazine. Since its creation four years ago, *Freedom Arts* has been a joy for me.

I want to thank all of the contributing writers, photographers, and artists. Thank you for your incredible works. And of course, I offer my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Karulak and Mr. Booker. I leave the magazine in good hands with John Guerrero, our next student editor.

Chris Hook
Student Editor

Faculty Editor's Note

This issue marks a bittersweet crossroads in the life of *Freedom Arts*. While we continue to celebrate and showcase the abundant creative energy that abides in the halls of Winston, this issue also marks the end of an era for the magazine—four years of love and dedication to this dream of an arts magazine by the entire Hook family: Rebecca, Dave, Robert (our founding editor), and Christopher. In the same period of time, Rebecca's parents Diane and Rodney Dale have been our generously devoted fairy godparents. We are indeed in good hands for next year, with John Guerrero as our next editor and Amanda Carr as our arts editor, but not without the solid foundation left to us by the Hooks and Dales. *Muito obrigado*.

Paschal M. Booker
Faculty Editor

Publisher's Note

Well, the road for us is ending here at Winston and a new one is beginning for the magazine. This was a wonderful experience. We discovered in the last four years an extraordinary range and depth of creativity---everything from writing to photography and painting to singing. It was a great source of joy for our entire family. We want to thank the unwavering support of Dr. Karulak and Pat Booker and all those at Winston who believed that this was a project worth supporting. Most importantly, thank you to the students for your contributions---- you are truly amazing!

Rebecca L. Hook
Publisher

Gypsy Bard

By: William Cluck

The train arrived at the Grandmark-Main station at about noon. A tall, auburn-haired man with bluish-green eyes stepped from a third class coach to the station floor. He held a cello in one hand and a tambourine in the other. All of this man's clothing was weather-worn and torn from his travels far and wide to distance lands. He wore brown fingerless gloves and on his fingers were many rings, some with gems, though most had no gems at all. On his side were strapped a cutlass next to a flintlock pistol, both of which seemed to be old and broken. The man took in a deep relaxed breath and proceeded to walk and look around the station, but he was stopped dead in his tracks by a large ladder. He looked up to see a few men painting over some words that effaced the side of a pillar; though he could not see what was written, he knew that it was strong and full of meaning.

He walked on and continued to gaze upon the beauty of the station, until he was halted by a spasmodic female voice: "Mr. Jackson Fox . . . Hello there . . . is your name Jack, no, sorry, are you Mr. Jackson, no, do you know a Mr. Fox . . . wait sir, are you, no . . . what about you . . . no . . . Mr. Jack, Mr. Fox!" He ran quickly to the woman calling his name and said, "Hello there, friend. I do believe that I'm the one ye are lookin' for, aye!" "Great to meet you, Mr. Fox. My name is Mae Winters, though my friends call me Winter. I'm here to bring to your friend Peter's flat near Clavering Boulevard. It will take a while to reach it, with all the traffic at this time of day, so we should be off as soon as we can," said the girl in a very happy and excited voice. "Let's proceed, my friend," replied Fox.

As they walked, they talked about the recent comings and goings in and around Grandmark, the recent series of bombings, along with the many protests that spawned riots. Some were crying for civil war and reform, while others wanted peace and equality. When they arrived at Peter's flat, Fox thanked the carriage driver and continued on with Winters. At the door, they heard many strange sounds coming from the flat; when they knocked upon the door, all sound stopped, and then the door flung open. Out rushed Peter Walter, who gave a hug so strong to Jack that he near broke his back. "Jack, it feels like it's been a lifetime, my friend! Come in and take some wine with me, oh I have missed you so much. So much has happened here in the city, but let us talk about this tomorrow. For now, let's just be happy again!" Jack and Peter talked long into the night until just before the dawn; they slept through most of the next day, until the sun was high in the sky.

When they awoke, they cooked a tasty breakfast and talked of many things. Peter talked about all of his inventions, as well as how the Grandmark criminal underground was doing, what with all the unbridled civil strife in the city.

Jack talked about his travels from around the world and the new songs that he had made; he also talked about an interesting event that happened to him on one of his travels . . . but, this event will not be told of within this story. Winters actually talked the . . . most of anyone, more towards Jack than towards Peter, for she saw Peter at least once a week about business, and had never met Jack.

After breakfast, Peter said, "Now, Fox, it's time for us to discuss why I have brought you to me from so far away and why I'm in so much need of your help. The people here are being oppressed and no one is willing to take a stand; those who have taken a stand have been imprisoned or killed. The only real reason why I became a crime lord was to help the people when I could, plus make some money on the side, but that's not the point. The point is that the people need someone like you, my friend. Now, I know that's sounds a bit muddled, but please listen. The people need you and I need you, for the tyranny of the government has grown too strong and too wide and must be stopped or overthrown. You, my friend, have the skill to do this. You are one of the best swordsmen I have ever seen, and you are a master marksmen. Both of these skills are greatly needed for the task before us. You are desperately needed in our fight against this government. Won't you please help us?"

"I'm all yours, my friend!" replied Fox.

"Alright, then. Let's get started. There is a prison located near the dock at the south end of the city, across from the Seawood Slaughterhouse. We need to free a man by the name of Marcus Hemlock. He is an illegal arms dealer and it is dire that we salvage him for our efforts of liberation, for he can give us the guns we need to dispose of this government. Since he is kept under high security, he won't be easy to reach. My suggestion is this: you should go through the slaughterhouse, as it has a bridge similar to the ones from the dock leading to the prison. The bridge is hardly ever used, so one may be able to find a way in to the prison, but you will have to go through the whole slaughterhouse before reaching the bridge. The house's workforce are all just a bunch of small-time street thugs, mixed with a few—and I mean a few—good poor people just trying to get by. The man who runs the slaughterhouse is named David Thorne. He is as cruel as a storm at sea and runs the slaughterhouse just like the prison across the way. If you encounter him, don't think twice about taking him out of business, along with any of his co-workers. Now, off you go, my friend. On your way downstairs, open the second door on the left. You are free to take any weapons and armor that you need to rescue Mr. Hemlock. Now, be off! Good luck, my friend!" said Peter Walter.

"Indeed!" said Jack, as he left the room. Downstairs, he opened the second door on the left to find more arms and ammunition than he ever thought to find. He loaded up with a few new pistols and a rifle, along with enough ammunition to erase an army. He also took the time to sharpen his already sharp sword and get a new one, along with a replacement for his outdated pistol. He then dressed himself in some very lightweight metal and leather, covering it a new long black leather coat, atop which he wore a gray hooded cloak.

Continued on Page 33

A Mild-Mannered Penguin

By Thomas Jefferson, a.k.a. Tij the Amazicle

Before the events I am about to describe, I must tell you something. I can't tell you what my current pseudonym is. I can't tell you where I live, or what I look like, but I can tell you who I was before the incident. You will learn what my sexy costume looks like so that you know who I am when you see me, but that's about it. Just know that what you are about to read is the story of a man who has been through more than anyone should ever have to go through.

Before the incident, I was just a normal high school student. I was a good person, the kind of person you see on the news for saving a baby. My name was Thomas Jefferson, and I was top of my class. I was raised by two doctors, so I have a slight idea of first aid, but not much. My grandparents lived down the street, and often times would pick me up from school. I was planning on playing football for my high school, even though my mom disliked the idea. That was before my life was changed forever.

I had just finished my semester exam for English 1. The class was taught by Mr. Bokker, an incredibly fun and nice teacher. That day he sent me to another teacher's room to work, so that I could focus. I was walking back to my desk when the fire alarm went off. Everyone went outside, and I was stuck standing right next to the road. Then, for no apparent reason, a nuclear waste truck went past the school. As it went by, the driver fell asleep, and the entire truck jack-knifed. The trailer burst open, and I was sprayed by the radioactive sludge. At first nothing happened. Then after a couple of weeks I realized something. It was the dead of winter, the temperature was twelve degrees, and I wasn't cold. In fact, I was warm. Then I was able to swim at amazing speeds, and could hold my breath for up to fifteen minutes. It was then that I realized I was the Mild-Mannered Penguin. It made sense, due to the fact that I had always loved penguins, and had always wondered what it would be like to be one.

Now, I wear a tuxedo all the time, with water-proofing of course, and on the chest of the tux is a penguin. The tuxedo makes sense, due the fact that, one, people always say penguins are wearing little tuxedos, and two, tuxedos are super bad-ass, just like penguins. I have a top hat to symbolize the fact that I am mild-mannered, and a nice pair of dress shoes, simply because a superhero can't be barefoot. I was able to use Time Lord technology to make all of the pockets on my tuxedo bigger on the inside, and in one pocket, I carry my signature weapon. Of course, such a nice outfit also requires a walking stick, if only so I don't look odd. Let's face it: have you ever seen a gentleman without a walking stick?

There you go. My life story—a tale of a man who has become something somewhat more than that. Now go home to your family, tell them that if they are near a coast, that they need not worry. If they ever need help more than about twenty miles inland, then they're out of luck. But, tell them to remember one thing, the single thing that could save their lives: tell them that they can never trust a dolphin.

FA



Alice's Tea Cup

By Amanda Carr

One Last Wheedle

By Arthur (Baroque) Trickett-Wile

Before being born, one must be conceived. Not in seed or in flesh even, but before all else, a thought must transpire and roll across the mind in a form, giving birth to all things in the universe—a form more pure than all others in the beginning, and at the end of all. Thought is what we are, what we become.

I am Brilliant Conscience. A mortal human is what I was and am no longer. I was born of my mother and father as a normal child. For 14 years of my mortal life, I was an intelligent, shy individual of no particular significance. Another component of the world. I was normal. I was mortal.

In my room, as inklings of starlight shimmered through my windows, I shut my eyes. I thought of everything throughout my life. A prenatal memory replayed to begin my entire life and how I came to lie there. Hours I spent in vivid photographic relapse of my life, before opening my eyes again. My arms were gone; my bed seemed to disregard my weight, as it relaxed in the absence of my body. Looking in the mirror on my bedside table, I could see what was behind me perfectly. I blinked and returned to my physical body and for years after developed mastery of a talent all my own. I could wish myself from physical time and space, spending sometimes months in pure thought. It ages you, if you sink into your mind; you see the truth and gain wisdom.

I have no costume, really. My pseudo-humanoid disguise is a diaphanous façade. I have an aura of a spirit burdened with a body; a certain uneasy mind that animates a cold and hardened shell without purpose. An anomaly of nature, I breathe with the world. I know everything and nothing at all.

I am Brilliant Conscience.

EA

From the Last Day in October

By Anonymous

The last week of the One loved . . .

I believe it was a Monday when my Aunt Lizzy called and said that Nana wasn't doing well, that she might only live for two more weeks. I was in the car when Aunt Lizzy called; I heard the whole conversation, and when my dad hung up, I asked him if I could tag along with him to see her. He said, "Yes. It would be good for you to see her one last time," but I didn't want it to be the last time I saw her.

We flew over to Jackson to see her; we left super early in the morning and got there about noon. All the way over, I felt that something bad would happen; I just didn't know what it was.

My Uncle Jeff picked us up at the airport. When we got to Aunt Lizzy's house, the first thing we did was go to Nana's room. She was asleep, so we just hung out in her room, trying to get her to wake up. Nothing was working, so we walked outside for a bit, looking at how nice and peaceful it was. There was nobody there; just the family. At one point, I was in the room alone with Nana and I tried to wake her up. It looked like she was trying to get up and talk to me, but nothing happened, so I talked to her as if she could hear me, and the funny thing is, I think she could. I told her about school and my problems, just hoping she would come through and help me out and give me one of her hugs. She never did: maybe she hugged me in her mind and helped me with my problems that way. But, she never came to; then my dad walked in and I walked on outside, just before it got dark, to get some air—I needed it.

Later on, I went back into Nana's room and told her goodnight; I knew she wanted to say goodnight back, but she just moved around a little bit. I prayed that she would wake up for me, so I could talk to her. That night I didn't have a dream; it was complete darkness and nothing at all. The dreams I have are the reason I'm still on this earth, but that night had a different feel to it—it was full of sadness and darkness.

The next day I got up early and asked my dad when we were heading out. He told me that on Monday I would be leaving, but he would be staying in Mississippi. We went fishing in the pond in the backyard. The day felt cold and dark to me; nothing about the day felt good. There was a feeling of death and sadness all around me. I went inside to see Nana, but she still wasn't awake. I wanted to put a cigarette in her mouth and give her a cup of coffee, so she could tell me more stories, stories about anything at all. I felt she had way more to tell me about her life. It was so hard to look at her; the way she looked just made me sadder.

At lunch, we went to Sonic. The whole way there, I kept hearing what a nice day it was, but I couldn't see anything nice about it at all. We got the food with

chocolate shakes. I guess we were hoping that Nana would wake up. She had always loved anything with sugar; that was just one of the many ways I felt that made us just alike. She had not awakened, and the day was ending fast. I ate a little, but I couldn't really eat, so I gave the food to my cousin. I went fishing again just to try to calm myself down; I was too out of it to do anything else. It felt like the slowest day of my life. I tried taking a nap, but I couldn't fall asleep.

That night I was in Nana's room with my dad and her dog. We were all hanging with her, but then I walked out to get a drink and watch the World Series. For some reason, I was reciting the poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade." As I said the part about *All in the valley of Death / Rode the six hundred*, I heard it. My dad was yelling, *It's happened*. As we all ran into the room, it had happened—the day that I feared the most. On October 20, 2013 . . . at 6:05 PM and 10 seconds . . . the worst day of my life happened. As we all gathered around and said a few prayers, I was talking to my Aunt: she told me that they say you're still alive for five minutes after everything stops.

That night was the longest night of my life. The priest was there with us, as we sat around her room with the Apple TV on, with her pictures and her music. As we called the family members and told them the news, I just sat there, thinking, *how do I deal with this, I've never had someone I was so close to pass away*. A million thoughts were in my mind and I just wanted answers. They would not resuscitate her, because in her will she had said "do not resuscitate." I posted on my Facebook and my Instagram about what had happened to my family and me. I didn't say pray for us, but if anyone wanted to, they could. Every time I walked into my room where my phone was, someone new had something to say, like *feeling bad* or *praying for you*, but every comment just made me sadder. At one point, I think everyone knew I was crying my eyes out into a pillow. My uncle asked me if I was okay and I put on a fake smile and just said yes. The people from the funeral home came and took her away. There was a fire going outside and my dad and I just sat there as he told me some stories about her. We walked back inside, and he told me that I could stay one more day and leave with him on Tuesday.

I went into Nana's room, just the dog and me. I sat there and petted the dog. I could tell he was sad; I could see it in his eyes. That night I still didn't have any dreams, even though I prayed that I could say goodbye to her and give her one last hug. The next morning I woke up a little later than I usually do; everybody was in nice clothes. They said they were going to see Nana, and asked if I would like to come along. On the way there, the others talked about how beautiful everything was, but I didn't see it; all I saw was dark and coldness—nothing was happy or light. I had a jacket on, even though it wasn't cold.

When we got to the funeral home, I saw a white building, big green trees, and grass nothing like Texas. At first, we walked in. I didn't get to see her, since we went right into the office area to do the reading of the will and other things, nothing I wanted to hear. After what felt like hours, we finally got to see Nana one last time. She looked happy and restful—better than what she looked like when I first arrived in Jackson. I said goodbye to her and then sat in the corner wondering

Continued on Page 32

Living the Dream

By Ian Scarff

I find myself walking towards a house in a field of flowers. It feels like the answers are inside somewhere, but I don't know. I walk up to the door and grab the handle. I turn the handle and open the door. I witness a great flash of light and the house and the world around it disappear. I fall through a dark tunnel and then find myself lying in bed.

I awake to the pounding of my heart. I sit up and turn on the light. It has been the same dream every night. I walk to the house and then nothing. I don't know if it's just a dream, or something more. I ponder this for a while until I hear the sound of my alarm clock. Then I hear a pounding on the door. "Get up right now, young man! We are leaving in fifteen minutes!" It's Jake, my foster dad.

I jump out of bed, grab my clothes, put them on as fast as I can, and then grab my backpack and rush out of the room. I run downstairs to the kitchen. Vicky, my foster mom, is cooking some eggs and bacon. "Could I have some of that?" I ask. "Feed yourself," is her response. I grab a box of cereal from the cabinet and start eating from the box. Jake yells, "Five minutes!" I shove the cereal box back in the cabinet and rush to the car.

One of the reasons I hate my foster father is that he says to be in the car in fifteen minutes, and then he doesn't get in the car for another forty minutes. Because of him, I'm always late for school. Frankly, I'd rather be back in the orphanage. I mean, don't get me wrong, I always wanted a family, but not like this. To these people, I am more like a slave. Whenever I get home from school, it's just chores, chores, chores.

After waiting for so long, Jake gets in the car and we drive off. About an hour later, we finally arrive at school. I grab my backpack, step out of the car, and watched Jake speed off, like he's glad to be rid of me. I walked into Jefferson High School, and nobody is in the hallways. Everyone is in second period. This is a first; usually, I don't show up until the end of second period. This time I show up in the middle of it. I walk down the hallway and entered the room of Mr. Schmidt, my science teacher.

"Well, Steve. Care to join us?" says Mr. Schmidt, as I try to sneak to my desk, ducking down. I just stand up straight and walk the rest of the way to my desk. I knew Mr. Schmidt wasn't happy that I was late again. I just sat through the rest of the class and the other morning classes like I usually do. When the bell rings for lunch, I get up and walk to the cafeteria. I get my lunch and sit by myself, like I usually do.

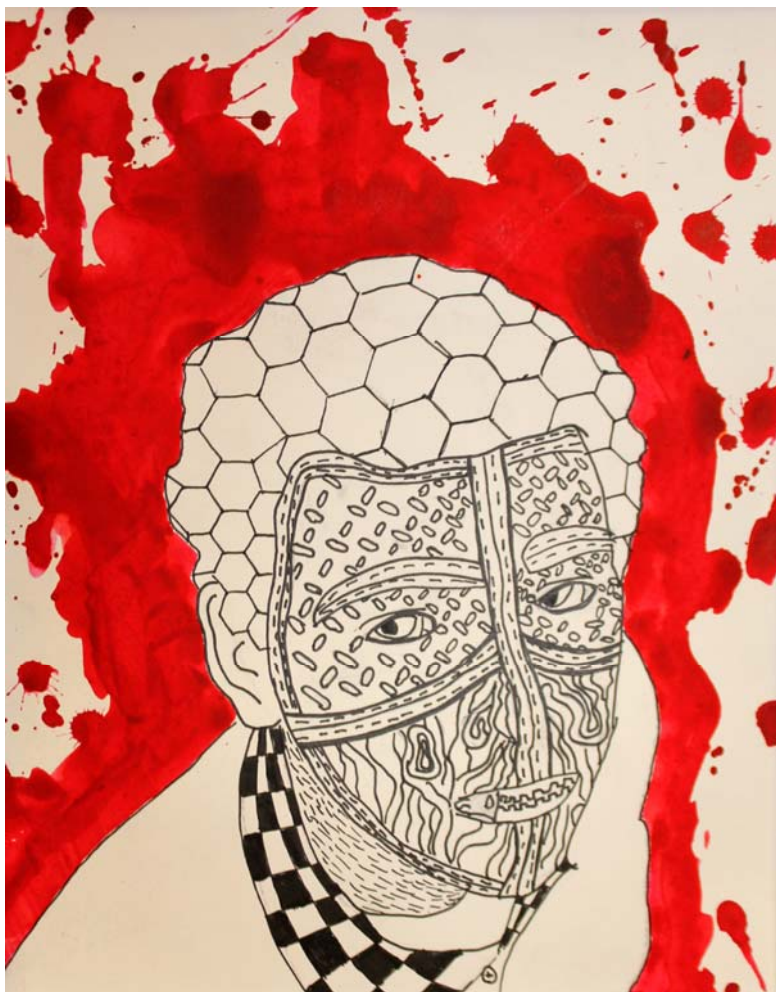
I'm about halfway through my lunch when some bullies come over and knock over my backpack. All of my stuff flies out of it. As I'm picking everything up, I notice something. There is a brown packaging folder amongst the spill. On the

cover it just said "To Steve." I open it up and there is a letter. I am astonished to see what the letter says:

If you want to know the truth about your real parents and why you are where you are now, go to 8672 One Lot Drive, Fair Fields, Texas 54629.

I look around quickly for anyone who looks out of the ordinary, but all I see are students. I look back at the letter. It says I will have to go to Texas, but I live in Columbus, Ohio. I quickly decide that I cannot spend another day with my foster parents, so I develop a plan to escape.

Continued on Page 30



Captive

By Trent Trevino

Space

(Oh dear God, please don't be the final frontier!)

By Alec Dietz & Josh White

At an old laboratory in a hollowed-out mountain in the Rockies, an old man stares blankly at a large television screen that keeps repeating one message: "Don't blink, blink and your dead, they are fast, faster than you can . . . oh, wait a second, we already beat the weeping angels." The television screen goes out and then comes on again, this time with a different message: "Whatever you do, don't look into the Yoda's eyes!" Doc. Brown gets up from the chair and turns off the T.V., just in time to receive a letter from THE Doctor.

"Dearest Augustine,

It has been nary a day since I've last thought of you. Matters stateside have taken a turn for the worst, as this year's gourd crop fell to a swarm of saltmarsh cutworms, and marital concerns continue to bedevil me."

Doc. Brown then notices a second letter fall from the ceiling. It reads:

"I'm sorry, I meant to mail that letter to somebody else, anyway. I need you to gather the greatest entrepreneurs of all time, and put a stop to the plans of the evil General Mr. Spock!"

Doc. Brown then did what any time-traveling doctor would do. He got into his half-baked time machine that wasn't bigger on the inside, and he gathered up the greatest entrepreneurs of all time and stuffed them in his tiny DeLorean. Of the entrepreneurs, he found only two that agreed to go with him; he had to kidnap the other three, but in the end he had his crew, which included Phillip Billingsworth (inventor of propeller hats), Fluffy Phat and Peter Phat (the inventors of pillowcases), Sir Roger Buckingham the 182nd of the 7th royal family of Europe (inventor of Swiss cheese, and who, for simplicity sake, we will call Roger), and finally Steve (inventor of nothing, as in the word "nothing"). The crew of English entrepreneurs was ready to board the Millennium Falcon, only to find out that it had been stolen by a gaggle of teenagers, so that they could destroy the Deathstar. Following that discovery, they boarded the Titanium Eagle instead.

The Titanium Eagle lifted off into the stars and headed toward its destination, the ancient Jupiter space station, which, despite the name, actually orbited Neptune. Doc. Brown and the crew put on their space suits, which they soon realized were not needed because of the station's perfectly adequate oxygen supply; yet still they wore them. Roger was the last to exit the ship, and upon entering the space station, saw a rock pass by his head. He looked in the direction from which it was thrown, but instead of finding the assailant, he saw a message on the wall:

“From The Doctor: 8,000 BC.”

Roger joined up with the rest of the crew and punched Doc. Brown in the face. “What was that for!” cried Doc. Brown; “You threw a rock at me, and almost damaged my perfectly grey face!” screamed Sir Roger as he threw the same rock onto the ground next to Doc. Brown, this time with a picture of the message from the doctor. Fluffy and Peter (being the only ones who joined voluntarily, and therefore being the only ones who knew about The Doctor) took almost an hour to explain that the assailant was not Doc. Brown. As if on cue, another rock flew by, this time with a message engraved on it *“Dearest Augustine; sorry, I’ll just send that note to her by letter and use this rock for Doc. Brown. GET TO THE CONTROL ROOM AND STOP WASTING TIME!!! From, the Doctor.”*

Doc. Brown and the crew did as they were told and entered the control room of the Jupiter space station. Upon examination, the crew found a map of Mars and some coordinates for an ancient Martian temple.

The Titanium Eagle took off and headed towards Mars, where they were ambushed by the evil General Mr. Spock! “Well this is quite a predicament,” said Doc. Brown, who was tied to his own control module. “Shut up, so that Shmegular can tie up the rest of your crew!” said the mysterious voice. “Who on earth, or rather, off of earth, is Shmegular!?” cried Fluffy, who was captured in a giant pillowcase. “Shmegular is Shmegular,” said Shmegular, “and Shmegular serves General Mr. Spock!” Doc. Brown screamed, “But I thought Star Trek didn’t come out until the 1900s!” “That’s what General Mr. Spock wants you to think!” screamed Sir Roger. Shmegular, getting annoyed with their conversation shoved the crew of the Titanium Eagle into an escape pod and took the ship.

The crew, or rather the ex-crew, of the Titanium Eagle were stranded in space and would have died, had Phillipam Billingsworth not had a spare propeller hat, which he used to cut the ropes. “Just as I suspected!” said Doc. Brown. “We are close enough to Mars, we can fly this escape pod to the planet, get ready for a bumpy—actually, you might want to make that a crash landing!” The crew of the Titanium Eagle escape pod was stranded, but again luck, was on their side. The crew woke up in an old temple, surrounded by small green aliens who talked backwards and had pointy ears. “By god, they look like little Yodas!” said Phillipam Billingsworth. “But, I thought *Star Wars* didn’t come out until the 1900’s!” cried Doc. Brown.

FA

My Superhero

By Ian McGinnis

I used to be a normal citizen, but that all changed one day. You see, I used to live a simple life with my daily routine of going to work, staring at a screen for hours, and then going home. Every day this constant and boring cycle continued, and what's worse, I was content with that. But, one day I saw something that would change my life forever. I was on my way home when I saw an old man being held at gunpoint by a mugger. I'd never been in much of a fight and I knew that he'd be long gone by the time the police showed up if I called them. No, I had to do something right away, so I charged him. We wrestled over each other for the gun and then I heard a gunshot and felt a sharp pain. I was shot.

The mugger realized what he did and ran off, leaving me to die. "This is it," I thought. "I'm going to die here, an absolute nothing. No legacy, no children, a completely wasteful speck, never remembered by anyone other than my relatives. I am nothing, and I'm going to be forgotten." Then I realized that the old man was still there. "Help," I was able to croak. The old man said, "Don't worry; you saved my life, now I'll save yours." Then everything went black.

I woke on an operating table. I had no idea where I was, what had happened to the old man, or how in the name of common sense I was still alive. Then the old man leaned over the table to look at me. "Well," he said. "You're still alive, so I guess the operation was a success." "What operation?" I asked. The old man calmly answered, "You were dying, my friend. You were dying, because you had risked so many potential years of your life in order to save maybe the ten more that I would have. That was pure selflessness. I had been looking for you for awhile." "What do you mean?" I asked. He answered, "Over the years, I've been working on making a superhero. However, by the time I figured it out, I was too old. So, I started looking for someone who had the heart of a hero. And today I found you." "I'm no hero," I said. "I'm not even that strong. You saw me fight." "You don't have to be," he replied. "Step in front of the mirror." I didn't understand, but I stood up and walked towards the mirror. I had to take a step back because at first, I couldn't believe it was me.

My body had been completely transformed. I went from an average build to being totally ripped. I had a six pack, pecs, you name it. I turned and asked the old man, "How is this possible?" He said, "Look at the monitor." I looked and saw my own vital signs. They made absolutely no sense. My temperature was one hundred and twenty! I turned to him and said, "Doc, I think your machine's broken." He smiled and simply shook his head. "It's state of the art," he said. "You're just the one who's different. You have a higher internal temperature and heartbeat than other people. And all that heat and your blood flowing so quickly is what gave you such good results." I started, "But how—" "I told you," he said. "You're a superhero."

I sat down and started to think about it. "So what are my powers?" I asked anxiously. He smiled and said, "I think first that introductions are in order. My name

is Doctor Incendie. I have been working on making a superhero for twenty five years. Your powers are extra human abilities, including speed and strength. You're not Superman, but you'll be able to beat any normal person. Also, you have much better healing abilities, which is why you're still alive after that bullet you took. Thanks again, by the way." "Sure, no problem," I replied, half sarcastically. "So are those all my powers?" "Not quite," he said, and I could see a glint of excitement in his eyes. I said, "I feel like you're saving the best for last." The excitement was obvious now as he answered, "Oh yes indeed. It's absolutely the best. Your main power is pyrojection and pyrokinesis." "What and what?" I responded. He replied, "Not only can you shoot fire anywhere out of your body, you can also control it with your mind." "So fire-bending?" I asked. He said, "In a more dumbed down sense, yes. Try it!" A target appeared on the wall and I faced it. I tried doing what I imagine you would do. I held my hand up and started snapping my fingers. "What ARE you doing?" the doctor said. I answered, "I thought that I could maybe make some sparks." He replied, "No. No! NO! You're not some kind of wizard! You have to focus your energy to one point to make it work. Try again!" So, I did what he said. I focused all of my energy into my hand. I kept thinking in my head, "Fire in my hand. Fire in my hand." All of a sudden, my hand was on fire!

At first I was shocked and expected to start feeling the searing hot pain, but nothing happened. The doctor said, "Oh, of course! I was going to make you a superhero who could make fire but was still hurt when fire touched him! Brilliant!" I saw the moment and said, "Wow! That was quite the *burn!*" The doctor rolled his eyes and said, "Let's move on. You've got a flaming fist, but that's just the first step. Now, focus the fire into your palm." I did as he said and now there was a small flame in the center of my hand. I aimed it at the target and imagined shooting straight at it. I tensed my arm and the shot rocketed from my hand, straight to the target. "Congratulations," he said. "You're a superhero. So, first things first. What is going to be your name?" I thought about it and said, "That thing you said I had earlier when my hand was on a fire. A flaming fist?" He said, "Yes." I said, "I think that's it. The Flaming Fist! Got a ring to it, right?" "Indeed," he said. "Any ideas for a costume?" I said, "Yeah, actually. I'll need a T-shirt with a flaming fist on it, a leather vest with the same fist on the back, and then a pair of black jeans that have knee-guards, and black combat boots. The shoes will need a special design. All of these need to be fire-proof."

The doctor then said to me, "I can understand several of those designs, but why are you wearing these instead of the usual superhero attire?" "I've never liked spandex," I told him. "So what is the special design of the boots," he questioned. I said, "I had an idea for using my ability. Do you have a training room?" He replied, "Of course." We walked into a completely empty room and the doctor said, "Training dummy." A single training dummy appeared in the center of the room. I walked up to the dummy and pulled my arm back. This is what the doctor saw: first a blur, and then the training dummy that had been bolted to the floor went flying into the wall, leaving a giant mark. The doctor looked at me and said, "What did you do!?" I explained what I had done: I pulled my fist back and then I shot fire out of my elbow, causing it to be rocketed, and making an incredible amount of speed and



Pinnacle

By Noah Schorr



Fisherman's Perspective

By Warren Weiss

From the World of *Sadie Norris*





Same Page

Above: *Reflection*

Right: *Cyborg Deer*

Below: *At the grasses' edge*

Opposite Page

Left *A Moment to Ponder*

Right: *Willow Rising*

Bottom: *Yesterday's Carnival*





Meadow Reflection

By Jace Husted

Bowl

By Blake Oliva



Basin of Gold

By Anthony Bauta

Dayyynum

By William Stouffer

Some say that a superhero's costume defines the story withheld deep below the spandex, but my story is withheld within denim. The stories are confined to that superhero, and never exposed directly; the costume tells the tale. After 15 years, I believe it is time to let the truth out. I'd like to say that I've recovered from the day it happened, but that would be a lie.

My story begins differently from any other, but you need a bit of background before that. I am a cat. My mother and father died when I was only a kitten, but that is not unusual for an outdoor cat. I was alone for the first year after them, although that was about to change.

I was walking around a supposedly "abandoned" factory when I came across something offbeat. I heard human voices from the factory. Lots of humans. I had always wondered what they were like. They had tamed the metal-wheeled horses and had these . . . cloth . . . things that covered their bodies. Were they hiding something?

The factory had a dumpster behind it that I always checked (although there was never anything in it). One day, however, I did find something (today, I know this to be denim). It looked similar to some leg cloths I had seen humans wear. Being a cat, I did some basic experiments on it. I stepped on it with my paw. I hit it with my paw. I even put it in my mouth. Nothing unusual about this. I was about to leave, when I came up with an idea. What would happen if I tried these leg cloths on like the humans did? I did my best to squirm into the leg cloths. They fit beautifully, somehow. I wore the leg cloths for 3 years. Humans began to notice me, pick me up in their arms, and make all kinds of communication sounds. I heard the word "jeans" a lot, so I assumed that the leg cloths were jeans.

Another year passed until I was the way I am. I walked out in a field as water fell from the sky (which for us cats is like God's way of showing command), when I just froze. A loud cracking noise sounded, and then I was asleep. I woke up a moon later, then I saw my so-called "jeans". They had . . . bonded with me (is the best way of putting it). As time went on, my fur turned into this jean fabric (denim). That is how I am today.

My normal identity is defined by my denim shirt, denim jacket, jeans, and denim socks. The only plus to this whole "denim" thing is the ladies. They say I'm like an ocean of small pillows. I'm very soft, although plenty strong and easily washable. Yes? Cat? 10th row, 47th from the left? ...No, we don't have any milk vending machines, now settle down. I'm giving the story of my life.

You see? I have suffered throughout my life. Denim can only go so far without ripping. My entire body is made from denim. This grants me the ability of being invulnerable to thin small sharp objects. If I ever get a cut, I always have my needle

Continued on Page 32

Impossibility Is Relative

By Jacob Gresores

In Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, the White Queen claims that we should think of several impossible things before breakfast. I believe that we should spend more time dreaming impossible things while being awake than we do while we're asleep.

Every time that I listen to a song that I like, I imagine a crazy, impossible music video happening around me. I've seen bands playing on rooftops as I pass them by. I've pictured the world around me liquefying and solidifying to the beat of the music. I've seen landscapes change with a singer's mood. Angst-ridden rockers making things burn. Mellow reggae artists slowing reality, and filling it with beauty and wonder. Music is a guide for the wandering mind.

I imagine unfortunate impossible things happening to people I'm mad at. Bullies have groveled at my feet. Annoying whiners have had their heads exploded by a sniper, who is a mile away. Authority figures have suffered many various, gruesome forms of torture, which would make Hannibal Lector want to tear his eyes out. Sometimes I imagine those creative deaths for no reason other than boredom. There are very few people that I don't have a scenario for.

Torture has more options without the laws of physics. Most people can't comprehend those possibilities. Others don't ever want to. Then there is me. I don't know why I do it. I just know I can't stop. I might be a sadist, I might be confused, or, maybe I'm the sane one and I'm the only one who really knows what's what. You decide.

I like imagining the world warping and changing around me into my crazy dream reality. It's a reality where I control everything that happens, as long as I can picture it happening. The laws of physics need not apply. I see cars turning to liquids, flattening into ribbons of metal and leather, then twisting, turning, and soaring through the sky. I can change my depth perception at will, light things on fire by being nearby, and create multiple levels of conscious thought, all with my imagination. When it comes to the concept of sentient thought, all you have to do is get rid of your rigid belief of "possibly," and bend your mind to your will.

I have multiple social personae, because I imagine my brain divided into channels one day. I sorted all these memories, skills, and behaviors into those channels. Now I can store unlimited information into my mind. I absorb every bit of knowledge. But, this skill comes with a catch. I can only access knowledge if I am completely immersed into the social persona that in which the knowledge is stored.

I can do these things because of a belief that I abandoned long ago—the belief that the definition of reality is set in stone, that what we perceive as "real" is fixed and unchangeable. My reality is fluid, ever-changing, and filled with enigmas.

My dream reality is filled with only impossible things—things like random laser turrets, super powers, zombies, talking animals, telepathy, and seeing the future. It's a world where nothing makes sense, but somehow, it works. It's a world where no one can touch me because I'm looking in from the outside. It's the best dream from which I never have to wake.

Elijah

By John Guerrero

I run my rugged hands through her soft golden brown hair. It's soothing against my torn and blistered skin. The waves of hair flowing over my fingers remind me of waves breaking against the shore. She leans her head against me. My hands pull her in, closer, until she's pressed tight against my chest. I hold onto my baby girl, the only real thing in my life. She's the only reason I'm still alive, the only reason I'm fighting for a better life. Everything I do is because of her—no one else. I watch as people walk past, not even caring to help. I look down at the empty jar that sits in our shadows, making sure that it's open. It is. For a moment, I was hoping it was closed. I was thinking that maybe, just maybe, people hadn't put any money in because it was sealed shut. It wasn't, though, and the empty jar bothered me.

Samantha looks up at me. I can't look into her eyes. It's too hard for a father to do, too hard to smile down at her when I can't even provide her a home, or even warm food. I worry every time we have to dig through trash, salvaging crumbs, even though I don't know if the food is any good. I don't know a lot of things.

I finally look down at her pale white skin, as her flickering blue-green eyes stare back at me. I want to cry. She's too young to understand the magnitude of our situation. She still thinks we have a home. I have to tell her that we're camping, and that we'll be going home soon. Deep down, it's a lie, because in truth, I'm not sure we'll ever have another home.

"Daddy, I'm cold," Samantha says, as she tries to inch closer to me. I wrap both arms around her, sharing whatever warmth I still have. "I know, baby girl, I know," I say, as I struggle to contain myself. I look up at the crowds of people walking past us—at least I attempt to, because none of them have the courage or the heart to look down at us. To them, I'm what's wrong with the world. I'm some beggar on the streets asking for money. I'm nothing but some washout trying to take away their hard-earned paychecks.

Part of this *is* my fault; I can admit to that. I lost my mind when I lost my wife. A part of my soul left me. Now I'm half a man, and half a man isn't enough to raise a daughter. My princess deserves more; she deserves so much better than me. I'm afraid, though, that if I give her up to the system, she'll never see me again. But, maybe that's a good thing. It might just be the way it needs to be. I hear Samantha ask, "Daddy, when are we going to go home?" I want to respond, but I'm afraid. "Soon, baby girl. You'll be home soon," I say, as tears roll down the side of my cheeks.

I turn away, looking straight ahead. My eyes gaze upon the festively decorated stores across the street from us. The windows have signs for ads, and red, green, and blue lights hang from the doors. Little cloth boots are pinned against the wall, with bells hanging from them. As the door opens to the store, caroling can be heard from inside, and I remember what day it is. It's Christmas Eve.

The season of giving, the one time of year we're supposed to be happy, when our problems are supposed to vanish. How can I make that happen, when I can't even control my life?

I softly nudge Samantha and ask, "Do you want to look at some toys?" She smiles and it nearly breaks me; I haven't seen her smile in a long time. It's simply stunning. I feel a sudden rush of tenderness in my heart, as if it's beating again. I pull Samantha to her feet, and we walk toward the crosswalk. My feet hurt. My shoes have holes in them and with almost every step a pebble or shard of broken glass impales the soles of my feet.

I spent the last of our good money buying Samantha her new shoes. "Daddy?" she says. "Why don't we have one of those?" She points to a car driving by. The sound of the engine and Christmas tunes fills my ears and I say, "We don't need one of those, Samantha." She skips happily along, and for a moment everything seems to be going right. She's smiling and her little backpack bounces on her shoulders. Her shoes light up with her every step. The brown strands of hair being blown by the wind. It's a moment I wish I could catch. A picture I wish I could save. If only this happiness could last longer. If only.

We reach the other side of the street and walk towards the store. I know I have money in my pocket. I'm not sure how much though. I don't know if it's enough to buy her something small. It might be, it might not be. I don't want to look though. I'm scared. "It's okay to be scared." I whisper to myself, "What did you say, daddy?" Samantha says tugging on my hand, propelling us closer to the door of the store, "Nothing baby girl, daddy was just talking to himself." I say.

Before I can reach the door handle, it swings open. A woman with her two boys walk out of the store, laughing and smiling. Why couldn't I have that? I know why. It's because of me. I shake that thought out of my head as we both enter the store. Samantha lets go of my hand and storms off running, looking at all the stuffed animals and dolls. They have all kinds of things—board games, soldiers, dolls with castles, everything a child could want. Anything a parent would want their child to have. I close my eyes, thinking of the life we could've had, thinking of the joy we should've had.

I open my eyes and see Samantha on the floor, playing with a castle with a group of other girls. I can't help but smile, to see her happy for once and talking to someone else besides me. It's heartwarming, a beautiful thing. I walk over to a chair and sit down and watch her play. It's kind of a funny thing. After all she's been through, after all we've been through, she can still find happiness. That's a good thing, something I can thrive on. Samantha looks over at me and smiles. I smile back and she comes running. She has something that I can't see behind her back, as she cries, "Daddy! Look!" She pulls out a brown teddy bear with a pink bowtie around its neck. Dead center on its belly is written in blue letters, *Hope*. The bears name is Hope; how ironic. "Can we get him, Daddy?" she asks. "Can we take Hope with us?" I grab the teddy bear and search for a price tag. Hope is a mere 67 cents. I reach down into my pocket and feel an abundance of change.

"Sure, baby girl," I say, as I grab her hand and walk towards one of the cash registers. We wait in line for a minute or so before being greeted by a cheerful man. I hand him the teddy bear as the amount of money owed shows up on his computer screen, "Did you find everything alright today?" he asks, as I nod my head. I start pulling out the coins, counting them as I go. Two quarters and one dime, that's it. That's all I have. I swear I felt more. I place the coins on the counter and reach back down into my pocket, anxiously feeling around for coins. That's when I feel it. I stick my finger through the hole that comes out the other side of

my pants. They must've fallen out. I only have 60 cents, that's all I have. I'm short 7. It's gone. I look down at Samantha, who is holding on tightly to the teddy bear that the man gave back.

I see so much joy in her, and I feel so much pain inside of me. How could I do this? How could I lose 7 whole cents? I'm an idiot. I should have never brought her here in the first place. This is all my fault, just like the rest of our crap lives. I look back up at the man; he's still smiling, waiting for the rest of the change, "Hey look, man," I say. "I lost the 7 cents. Can you do me a favor and just let her have it?" I speak softly, so that Samantha doesn't hear me. "I'm sorry, sir, but if you can't pay, I can't let you leave with that bear," says the man. I tighten my grip on Samantha's hand. I try not to squeeze too hard, I try not to hurt her. I have to channel my anger somewhere. Just not here. Looking into the man's eyes, hoping that he'll see my pain, I say, "Please, let me take the bear and I promise I'll come back with the 7 cents." His answer is simple: "I'm afraid there's nothing I can do. I'm sorry sir."

I sigh, knowing what I have to do is going to hurt; it's going to hurt a lot. I reach down and look at Samantha. She's hugging the bear to her face. "Baby girl," I say, "Hope isn't going to be able to come with us this time." I try to loosen her grip. "Why, Daddy?" The question kills me; I don't know how to respond to her. "We can't afford him, baby girl," I say, hoping she'll understand. "What do you mean, Daddy?" Her innocent voice echoes in my ears. I wish I could shut it out. I wish I didn't have to do this, "Hope cannot come, okay? That's it. He cannot come with us!" I say angrily, not really knowing how it came out. "But, Daddy, he has to come!" she screams at me. I shake a little before completely tugging the bear out of her hands, "No!" she yells at the top of her lungs, "he has to come!" I try and block it out but I can't. I feel her small little fist hitting the side of my hips, "Give him back!" She yells in-between sobs. I can't look down at her as I hand the clerk over the bear.

I find her soft little hands without looking down and hold on tight as I can as we walk out. Samantha's still screaming and crying; I can feel her twisting her body around to look at the bear that now sits on the clerk's counter. I feel the eyes of all the other parents judging me and whispering to each other. I feel it all, and I hate every single moment of it. I push the door open and the brightness from the sun glares down upon us. I squint my eyes, adjusting to it. I feel as if I've been in a cave this whole time, and now I'm reentering the real world from a false paradise.

I find the closest bench and sit down with Samantha. We both stare forward, watching as all the different colored cars pass us by. We listen to the birds and the conversations around us, and feel the vibrations of the cars from off the street. I place my arm around Samantha's shoulders. She tries to wiggle away from me, but I bring her in closer. I look down into her eyes and now I see it. I see the same pain that I've been feeling. This whole time she's been hiding it. But now I see it. It's right there in front of me. Clearer than water, I see it, as I say, "You know, it hasn't been easy for us these past couple of months. I'm starting to doubt that I'm a good father for you, Samantha. Do you know what today is?" She shakes her head wildly. "It's Christmas Eve."

She gives me a crazy look. "Do you know what that means?" I ask. Again, she shakes her head. "It means that tomorrow is Christmas, a day when you're supposed to give gifts." She looks behind us towards the toy store and says, "But Daddy,



Free as a Bird

By Kayla Thomas

power behind my punch. I used physics by placing the other hand in front before the punch and when I sent fire out of the elbow, I also shot a small jet from my palm, making the arm go back, giving all that much more pressure to the punch. The doctor cried out, "My God! THAT IS GENIUS! You'll be more powerful than I had ever imagined!" I then said, "That's why I need a special design for the boots. They need to have holes." "Holes," the doctor asked. I said, "Bring out two more dummies. I'll show you." The doctor brought out two more dummies. I grabbed the head of the first one and started to bring it down in a motion to knee it in the head. Once again, it looked like it had skipped a few moments in time as the dummy went flying and made another crack in the wall. Then, I started a spin kick, and it looked like time sped up and then returned to normal when the dummy was flying to the spot in the wall where the other dummies were lodged. This time the cracked wall was broken down.

I explained to the doctor, "With holes in my boots, I'll be able not only to fly, but perform attacks such as those." "Very well," replied the doctor. I added, "I have one more move I want to try. Give me half an hour," I said. When I returned, I found the wall was repaired and on the other wall there was now a dummy secured to the wall. "Perfect," I said. "Please be careful this time," the doctor begged. I walked up to the dummy and held out my hands in the same position, with one arm back and the other hand in front. Then it started. What the doctor saw looked like an everlasting blur as the dummy suffered an onslaught of fists that kept barraging it until the wall gave way and the dummy went flying through it. The doctor stared at me, the wall, and then at me again, and simply said, "Explain." This move was my most complicated and my most devastating. How it started was the same kind of punch, but then I expanded on that. After the punch made impact, my other arm would draw back in a punching motion. Then, I would send the fist back with a jet and shoot a jet from the elbow of the drawn-back fist, causing another devastating punch. All of this happened within seconds, causing a sort of machine gun punch, which is what I would later call my newly discovered move.

My costume was what I described earlier, though with some new details: a white T-shirt with a flaming fist on it, a black vest with the logo, black jeans with knee guards and black boots. The new adjustments were a black headband with flames on it, which doubled as my mask, since I could see through the material over my eyes, though people on the outside couldn't. I also now had fingerless black gloves, mostly just because they looked cool, and finally I had a belt buckle with my logo on it. All of these things are flame-proof.

After I trained and sharpened my skills for half a year, I moved away from my boring life, and moved back to my home city of San Antonio. For the first year or so, the police saw me as a simple vigilante, but now they see me as a hero. I've also started to have to deal with super villains, such as the slime man, or my arch enemy, the Ickiller, a homicidal maniac who is now an ice man, able to freeze the

environment around him and make weapons onto his hands out of ice such as claws or an ice pike. We are opposites and therefore each other's weaknesses. But, I'm always able to stop him. I will always be here, protecting this city, from the petty thief to the most dangerous super villain. I am the fire that provides warmth and light to the darkness of this city. I am The Flaming Fist!

FA



Flame On !

By Sadie Norris

I wait until it's midnight to strike. In total darkness, I sneak into my foster parents' bedroom and steal Jake's debit card. I go back to my room, where I grab a backpack fully loaded with clothes and dry food. I sneak downstairs and out of the house. I go to the nearest bank and withdraw over five thousand dollars from Jake's savings. I believe that it's enough to make up for all the horrible years. I also do this so they can't track me. After I get the money, I start walking to the airport.

Lucky for me, Jake and Vicky don't live that far from the airport. It takes me about an hour and a half to walk there. I enter the airport and I feel a sense of freedom come over me. I go to buy a one-way ticket to San Antonio, Texas. Thankfully, the woman at the counter doesn't ask any questions. I take my ticket and proceed through the security line. It's a miracle I get through the line without any trouble. I go to board my plane and sit down in a second class seat next to a window. We take off and I am finally free. Since it's late at night, I decide that I should get some sleep.

I fall into the same dream again. I'm walking towards a house in a field of flowers. I walk up to the door and grab the handle. I turn the handle and open the door. I witness a great flash of light and the house and the world around it disappear. I fall through a dark tunnel. I awaken to the sound of the captain giving the announcement that we are about to land. I looked at my watch; it is only 5:12 in the morning. I decide to grab a hotel for a few hours, with some of the money I have.

It's about 3:15 when I decide that it's time to go find my real parents. I call a cab from the front desk of the hotel and wait. About thirty minutes later, the cab arrives. I get in the cab and say, "I need you to take me to 8672 One Lot Drive, Fair Fields, Texas 54629." The driver enters the address into his GPS and we are off. About an hour later, we are driving down the interstate in the middle of nowhere. It feels like we're not going anywhere, but suddenly the cab turns onto the access road. The cab slows down and we turn onto a street. I look at the street name: it is One Lot Drive. We continue on down the road, but there is no sign of a house or anything. I doze off into a deep sleep, and the dream comes again.

It's about 7:30 p.m. when the driver of the cab says, "We're here. That will be \$578." I hand the driver the money, get out of the cab, and watch it dive off. I find myself in a flower field. I turn around to find a house. It is the same one as the one in the dream. Every detail is exactly the same. I walk down the pathway to the door, stop at the door, and think to myself, "I'm about to meet my real parents. What should I say?" I grab the handle and open the door.

No one is home. The house is covered in knick-knacks and paintings. "Hello?" I say. I hear footsteps entering the room to my left. I look over to see a woman. She is in her mid-thirties. "Who are you?" she asks. I say, "My name is Steve." Just as I was about to speak again, she stops me. "Ah, Steve, I have been waiting for you. My name is Julia." she says. That sounds a little creepy, but I shake it off. "Your letter says that I will find the truth of my parents here. Where are they?" I ask. The attitude of her face changes from a smile to more of a depressed look. "Do you really want to know?" she asks. "Absolutely!" I respond.

"Okay. Follow me," Julia says.

She leads me to the back of the house and out the back door. We walk through a flower field to a clearing. In this clearing, there are only two small flower patches. At the front of these flowers, there is a tombstone. The tombstone read:

*R.I.P
Mary and Joseph Clark
"We love you, Steve, our son"*

I went to my knees. I came all the way out here to find out my parents are dead. I turn to Julia. "How did they die?" I ask. Julia says, "When you were only one year old, you and your parents were off to come see me. You guys were about halfway through the drive when a semi-truck crashed into them. The driver was drunk. Your parents died on impact. Fortunately, you survived. Your parents' will stated that if they were to die, to put you in an orphanage and that you would learn the truth when you turn sixteen. They also said that they wanted to be buried behind their house. I was going to adopt you, but your foster parents, Jake and Vicky, did it first. When I found out that you and your foster parents had moved to Columbus, Ohio, I thought I had lost you forever. Then a few years later, I found you again, so I waited to send the letter to you until you were sixteen."

I started to cry a little. "Did the will say anything else?" I asked. "Yes," Julia said. "They left you their life savings and their house. It also says that if you want to, you can come live with me." Who are you?" I ask. "I'm your aunt." Julia says. I run up and give her a hug. We went back into the house and my life was changed for the better.

FA

Elijah

Continued from Page 26

we didn't get Hope." "I know, baby girl, but I have a better gift to give you. We gotta catch the bus first." "Okay," she says, and watches the birds fly and land on the sidewalk.

After an hour of waiting, the bus finally comes. We board and take our seats. The doors close and we watch as shops, people, and other cars fly by the window. Samantha rests her head upon the window, looking out, seeing the world for what it really is. I look out for our stop. In my head I hope it never comes. I know where we're going. I know it's the right thing to do. She doesn't deserve to live like this. This isn't how I want her to live. I want her to have a better life than this. I'm going to give it to her. I'm going to save her. It's the best thing for me to do. It's the best present I can give her, even if it means letting go. I have to do this. It's the right thing to do.

Finally, we reach our stop—stop 218. The end of the final ride we will both take together. It might take her awhile, but eventually she'll understand. I pick her up and carry her off the bus, as I use the 60 cents to cover the fare. We both step off. Her head is facing the bus over my shoulder, and I'm looking directly at her new home. The words reflect in my eyes: Bronx Home for Children, a shelter for homeless and abandoned kids.

Abandoning: this isn't what I'm doing. This word is nowhere close to what I'm doing. I feel more like I'm giving Samantha a second chance at life. Another chance to make it right for her, before it's too late. Like I said, it might take her awhile, but eventually she'll be happy here. Eventually, she'll have a better home and more stable life. I step forward; I feel my legs weakening on me. I don't know if I can do this. But, I have to.

FA

what heaven was like: *Was it like I was told or was it different?*

We went to a restaurant for lunch. I'd not had a good stomach for a while, but that day it felt even worse. I got a pizza to go, just in case I got hungry or bored. My dad and I went fishing again; nothing was biting, so we just fed the fish. We went back inside and I sat there. I didn't really want to talk; I just wanted to listen to music and be alone. Nothing felt right that day; everything felt wrong. My dad went to get something and I went with him. When we got there, I went to Dick's Sporting Goods to look at guns. That usually made me happy, but not this time. On the way home, we got ice cream, but it made me sick.

Back at the house, the others said they were going out to eat, to one of Nana's favorite places. I sat in the backseat of the car with my aunts; I didn't have a problem with it. It was just a little cramped, in a little car. On the ride, I saw a different kind of Mississippi: I saw it at night. When we got to the restaurant, I quickly saw that I was underdressed, but I didn't care. No one was going to tell me how to dress. When we got seated, I saw that there was one open chair at the table. All I could think about was *Is she here with us at this nice dinner? Will she always be with us? Will she be there through thick and thin? Will she keep us away from evil and keep our hearts pure? I thought, yes, she would do all of that for us. She will not make a path for us, but she will guide us through it. She will not clothe and feed us, but she will teach us the way to get food and clothes.* My uncle talked to me at the time about life and other stuff, but I didn't hear him. I was too busy thinking about Nana and what she would be doing.

FA

and string. I have exceled at sewing classes, although lacked skill in others. This, my fellow felines, is my speech. I have told you my story of hardship and distrust toward human kind. As one we are weak, but together we form a mighty band.

In summary, my threads are strong, and my heart continues to beat. I wish not to worry about such things as humans. Cat-kind has been jailed by humans. The mating process is only enjoyable if you get your choice. This, I assume, humans know. Please, donate to the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) to help those poor-looking puppies and kittens you see in the commercial. Thank you. Meeting Adjourned.

FA

After gearing up, Jack slipped out into the streets; he looked like a common traveler walking out in the cold. He was stopped by a city watch officer, who called, "Oy, you there, what are ye up to down here out at the shipyards, lad!"

"Oh, I'm going out to the pubs, sir," replied Jack.

"Alright, off with you, lad," said the officer. "Let me catch you out too late and I'll have you in irons."

Jack was not moved by the man's remark at all, but as he walked through the city, he saw all the terrible things that were going on around him; the gravity of his mission grew heavier. He told himself that he had to reach the slaughterhouse before sunset, so he jumped into an alleyway and cut across many dark paths to his destination.

The air smelled foul. Night had fallen, so Jack was able to see the lights from the slaughterhouse and the prison; they burned like fire in the night and made both structures look like terrible mountains of steel and rock. Jack paused, and then started to climb over stairs and through windows, to get atop the roofs of the surrounding buildings. He moved like a shadow and was as quick as the wind, jumping and running from rooftop to rooftop. He reached a middle floor of the Sea-wood Slaughterhouse and saw countless dead whales, sharks, and other fish, along with men cutting and gutting them. To his right, he heard the sound of someone coming up the stairs; he drew his sword, lunged at the man as quick as light, and threw the body out the window. He had to go up a few more floors to reach the bridge; on his way, he killed at least twenty more workers, until he reached Thorne's office. He knew he had to go in and end the man's life, for what he saw was happening in the house of slaughter. He opened the door slowly, as if it were being opened by the wind; Thorne did not hear him enter. Jack then closed the door with a slam that sent a crack through the glass on the door; he then cut the power to the office, so that there was only one light hanging over his head. Thorne could see only a void darkness in front of him; he heard nothing but his own breath and sat frozen with fear.

A voice spoke: "You are not a businessman. You are a dead man, along with your slaughterhouse. Relinquish the key to the bridge and I will let you live." Thorne placed the keys on the table and out of the darkness a hand went to claim them. The voice spoke again: "Like I said, you are a dead man." As the words finished, Jack grabbed Thorne from across the desk and shoved the sword deep in his chest. He then looked at the keys and said, "Now, on to saving Mr. Hemlock."

FA

I Will Lift My Head

By Alaina Merin

I stand before a fork in the path
I am lost like a child
All around me the world is full of wrath
My emotions are running wild
However, I will lift my head and look to tomorrow
I will feel no more sorrow

I will lift my head higher than the tallest tree
I will lift my head above the mountains
I will lift my head until you can see me
Words will flow out of my mouth like a fountain
I will lift my head towards the North Star
And I will know that you are not that far

In my head I hear a million voices
I am not sure which is right
But it is time to stand firmly by my choices
And never give up the fight
Until the day I am dead
I will lift my head

FA

STUDENTS OF WINSTON
TAP INTO THE TREASURE
THAT IS FREEDOM ARTS....
THIS IS YOUR GOLD.

Paschal M. Booker
Faculty Editor
December 2010



Liquid Gold

by T. J. Gold



W

The
Winston
School San Antonio